

Sergeant John Ordway

1775-1817

First Sergeant, Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery, 1803-1806

The larger than life, bronze, sculptured statue of First Sergeant John Ordway will be placed in the Fort Lewis Memorial Park to be located at the Main Gate of Fort Lewis, Washington, during the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Corps of Discovery's epic journey. To the right is the artist's concept drawing that will guide the sculptor in developing and constructing the statue.

The 28-year-old Sergeant Ordway was stationed at the frontier post of Fort Kaskaskia in Indiana Territory when he volunteered in 1803 for the Captain Lewis and Clark led Army task force. The mission was to explore the Missouri and Columbia rivers route west to the Pacific Ocean. As First Sergeant, he was third in the chain of command, behind the two captains, with the important daily duties of maintaining the book of detachment orders, writing daily activities in the official journal, and managing the distribution of rations and other supplies. Much is made today of the journals of the officers and others. Sergeant Ordway was the only one to make a journal entry every day. This is the most complete record of the journey, providing valuable insights for today's historians. A consistently responsible, reliable and competent leader, Sergeant Ordway led a separate subordinate task force during the return trip that allowed the Captains to expand the area of exploration. After the expedition, Sergeant Ordway accompanied Captain Lewis with an Indian delegation to see President Thomas Jefferson in Washington, DC.

History remembers the generals and other great captains, but hardly ever is recognition given to enlisted soldiers for their service and work. A bronze, sculptured, larger than life statue of Captain Meriwether Lewis in the Fort Lewis Memorial Park will remind the public that the Washington State Army Post was named for the leader of the expedition. The same sized statue of Sergeant Ordway will ensure remembrance of his important work and the contribution of the enlisted soldiers to the success of the Corps of Discovery mission. First Sergeants are key to the operations of the United States Army. A plaque on the Sergeant Ordway statue granite rock base will honor all first sergeants who have served in the United States Army.



Sgt. Ordway, 1st Infantry Regiment

Please be a Friend of the American Soldier and donate to this worthwhile project. The Fort Lewis Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) is raising the funds to purchase the Sergeant Ordway statue and associated explanatory plaques. Donations are exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and receipts will be given when required by the Code's section 170f(8). EIN is 53-0193361. Checks should be made payable to the Fort Lewis Chapter, AUSA. Please mail donations to: Fort Lewis Chapter, AUSA, PO Box 33181, Fort Lewis, WA 98433. For further information call (253) 588-5915.

